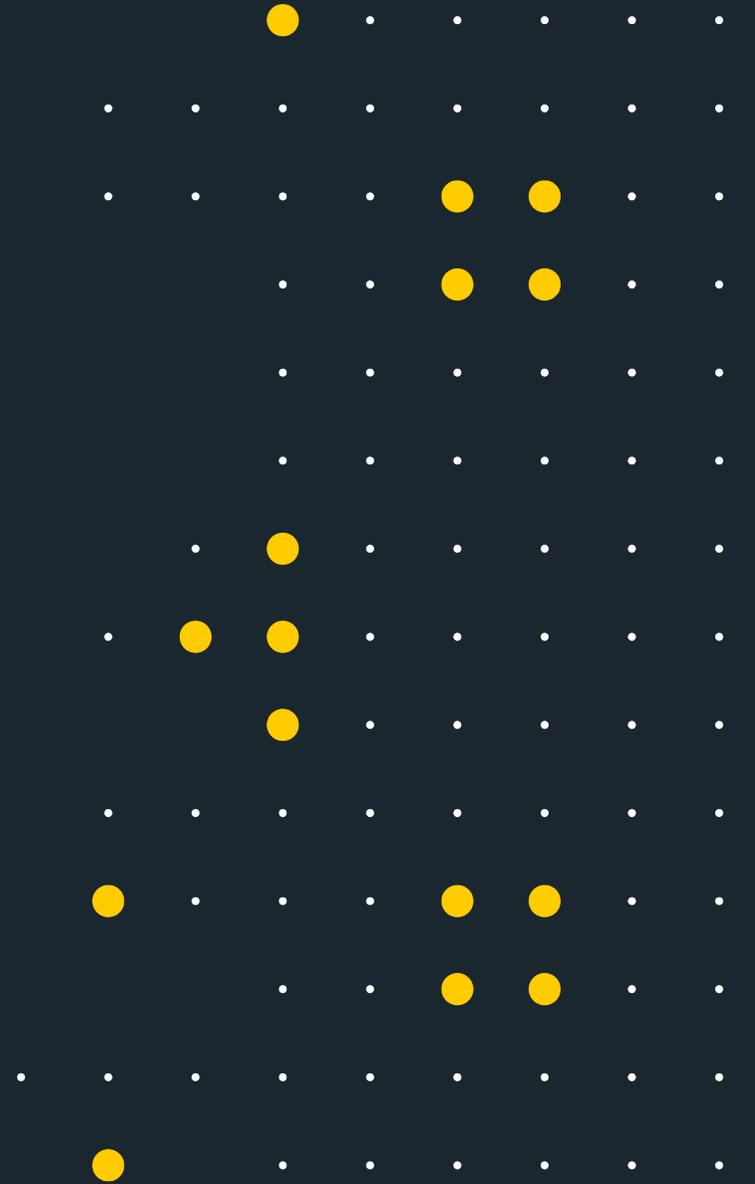




# QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026 results

Impact on the Skills Economy



**How well prepared is your  
country for the future of work?**

# Higher education has a critical role to play in enabling the workforce of tomorrow to adapt

## Why?

A country's higher education system is one of the key pipelines for producing future talent

## How?

Countries that invest in high-quality academic programmes in AI, digital, and sustainability are setting themselves up for long-term success

## What?

The QS World University Rankings by Subject are a robust measure in assessing how institutions perform in these subjects

# How can we use our Subject Rankings to measure performance across different countries?

## **The number of ranked universities**

Provides insight into the overall academic infrastructure of a country

## **The average performance of those universities**

Provides an indication of the quality of universities within any given country

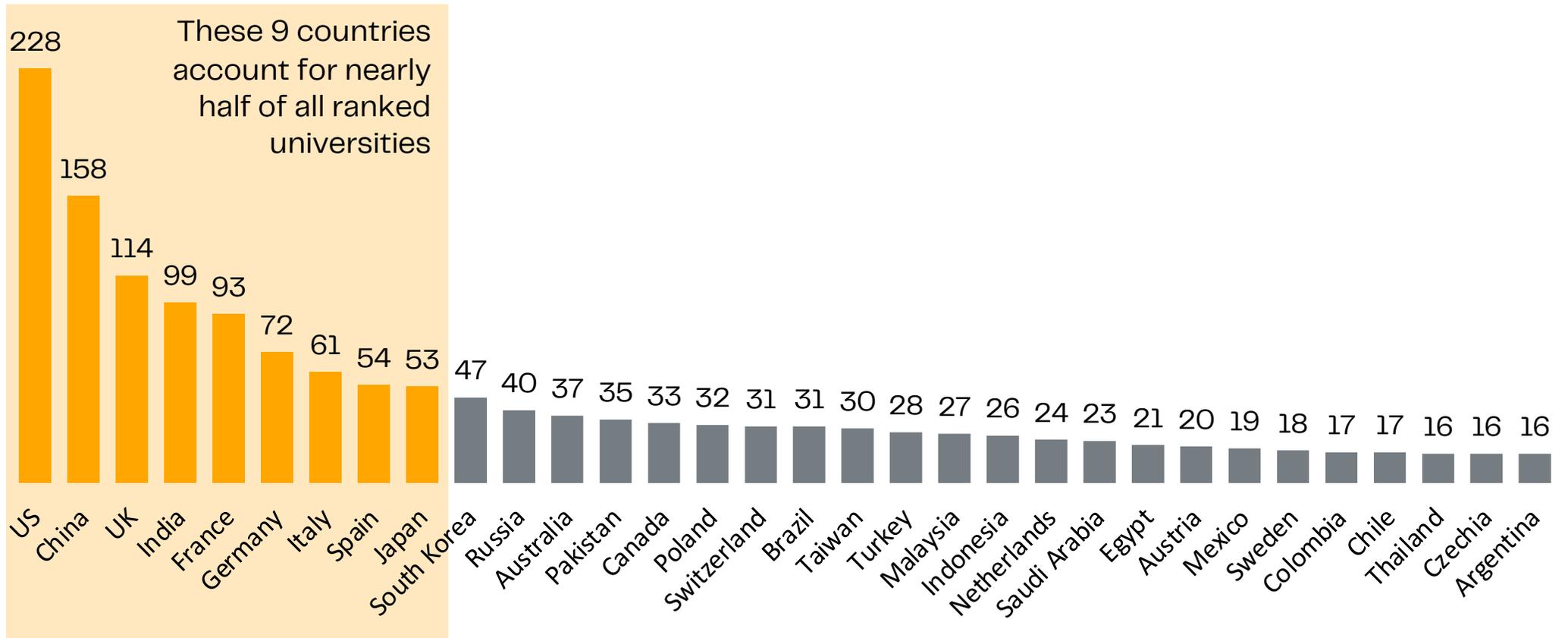
## **The average performance of universities in AI, Digital and Green-related subjects**

Provides an indication of the quality of those universities in subjects that will feed economic innovation and disruption

# The number of ranked universities

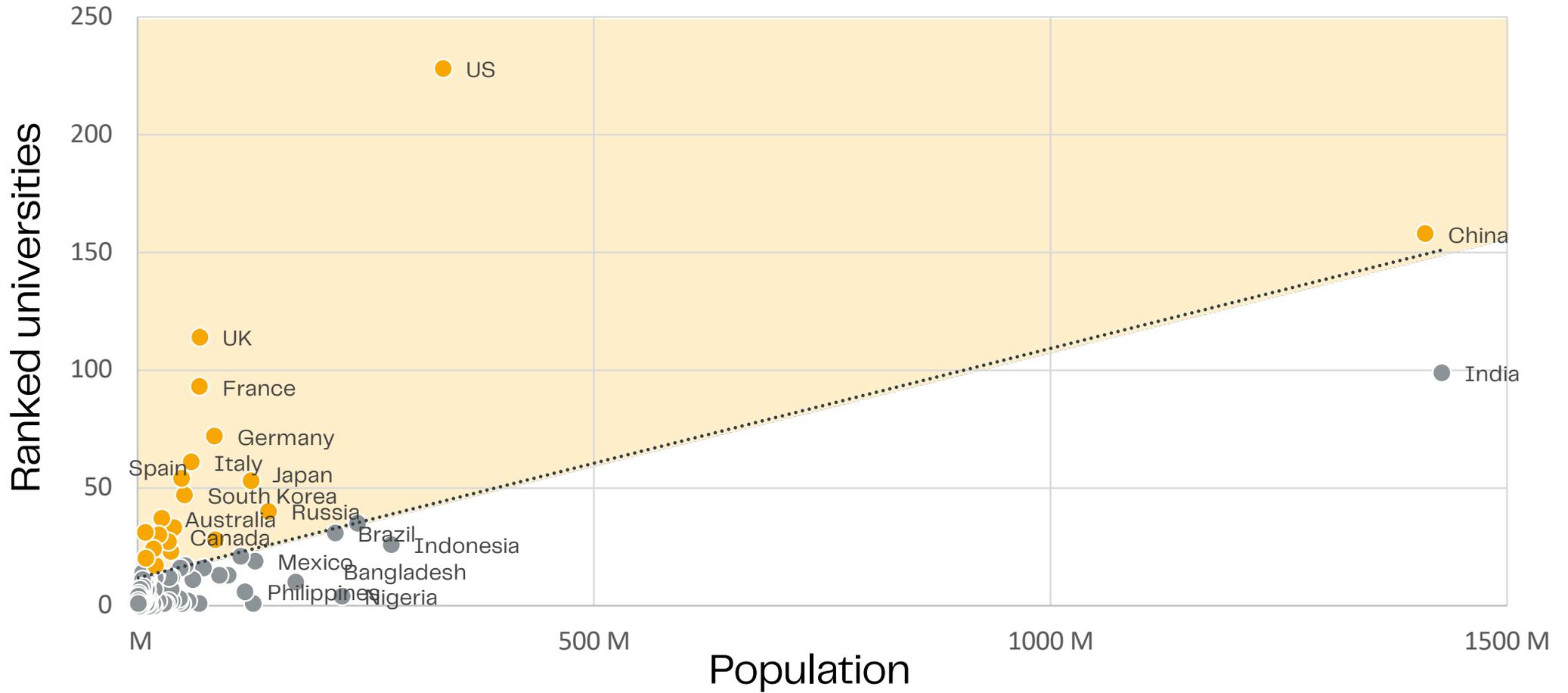
# Most ranked institutions are confined to US and Europe

Number of ranked institutions (Top 30 countries)



Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026

# All of whom have a higher number of ranked universities relative to their population size

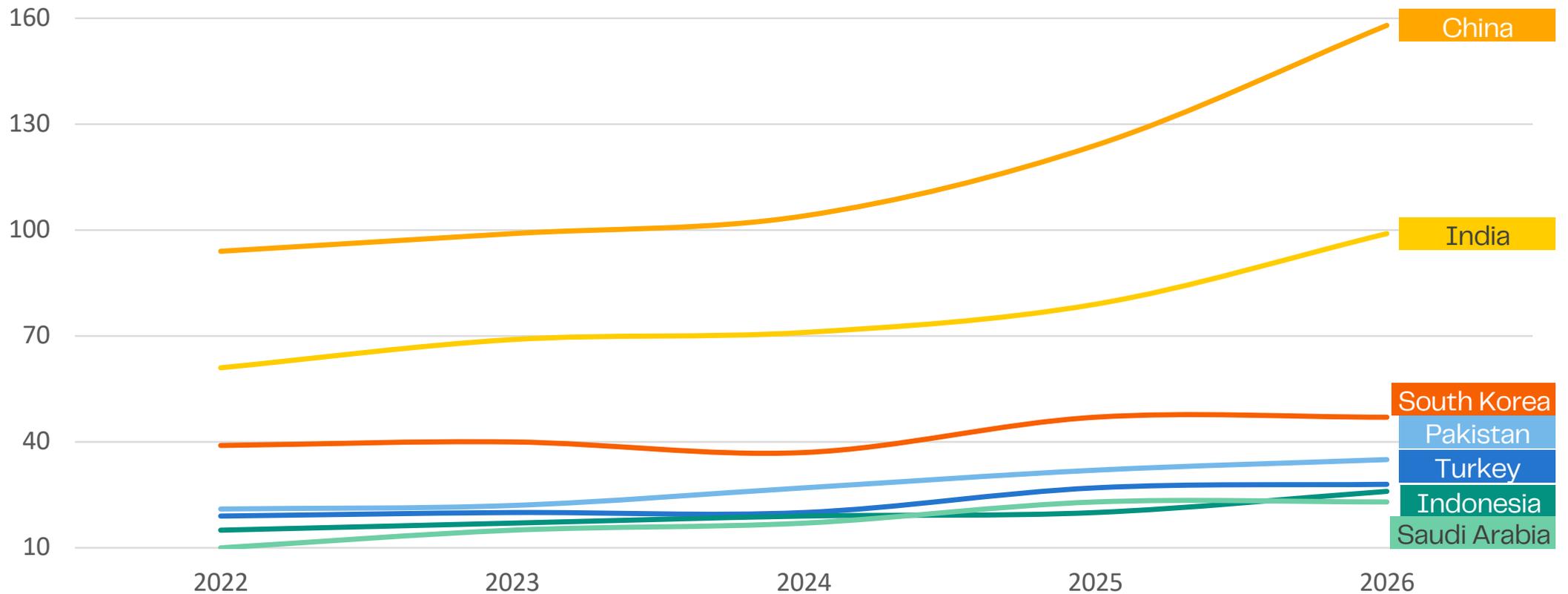


The number of ranked universities

QS

# But emerging economies are increasingly challenging the status-quo with new entrants every year

Number of ranked institutions



Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2022-2026

## With China and India focusing efforts in STEM subjects

### China

**34** new entrants in 2026

**26** Subjects have new Chinese representation

### New entrants

- 8 in Medicine
- 6 in Chemistry
- 6 in Economics
- 4 in Computer Science
- 4 in Physics

### India

**20** new entrants in 2026

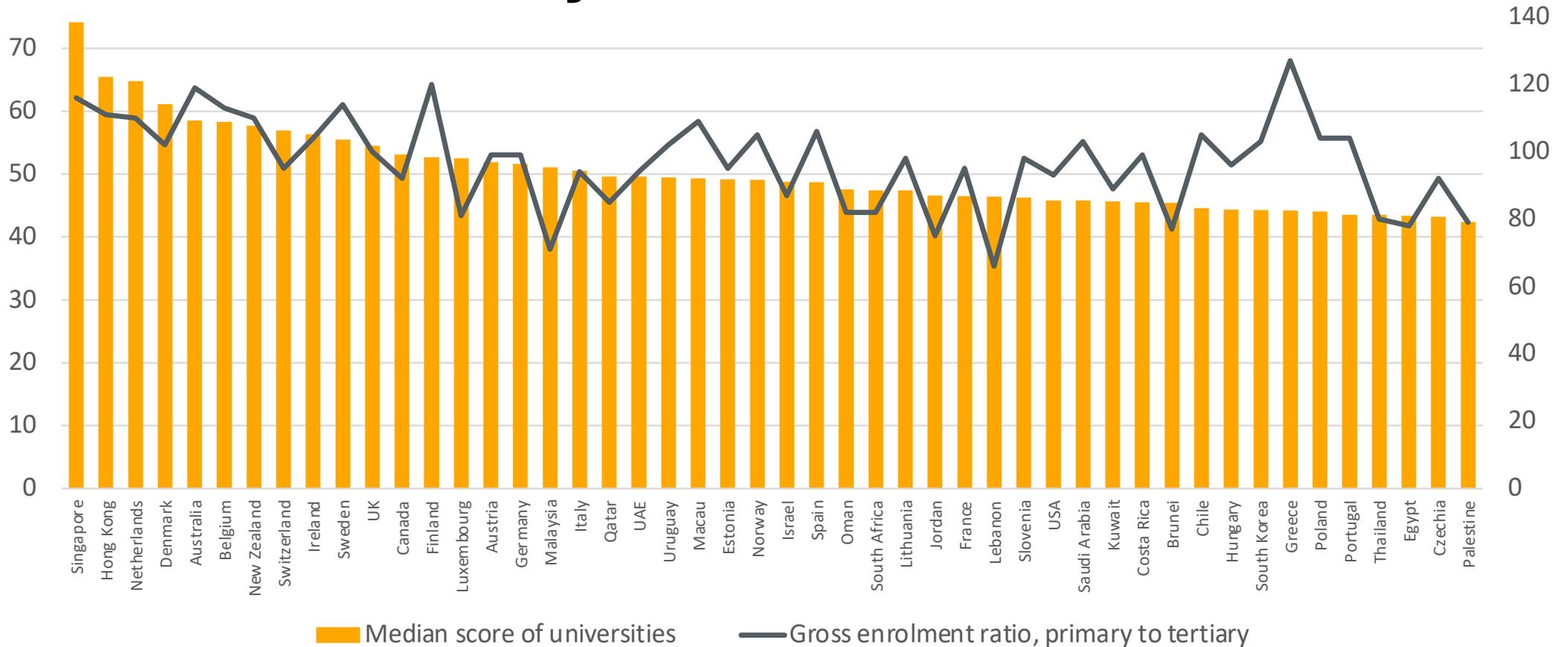
**21** Subjects have new Indian representation

### New entrants

- 5 in Chemistry
- 4 in Medicine
- 4 in Computer Science
- 3 in Agriculture
- 2 in English Literature

**The average performance of  
those universities**

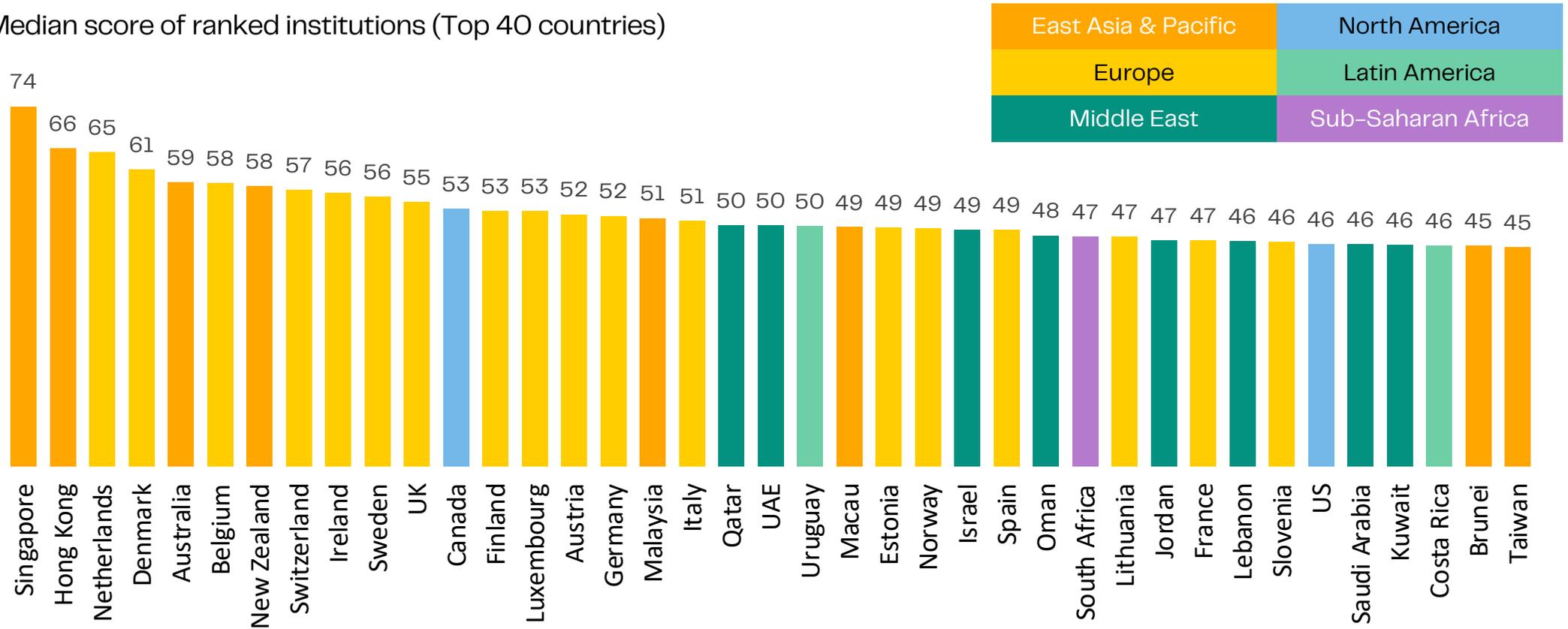
# The quality of universities in the subject rankings is closely correlated with tertiary enrolment rates...



Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026 & UNESCO Institute for Statistics

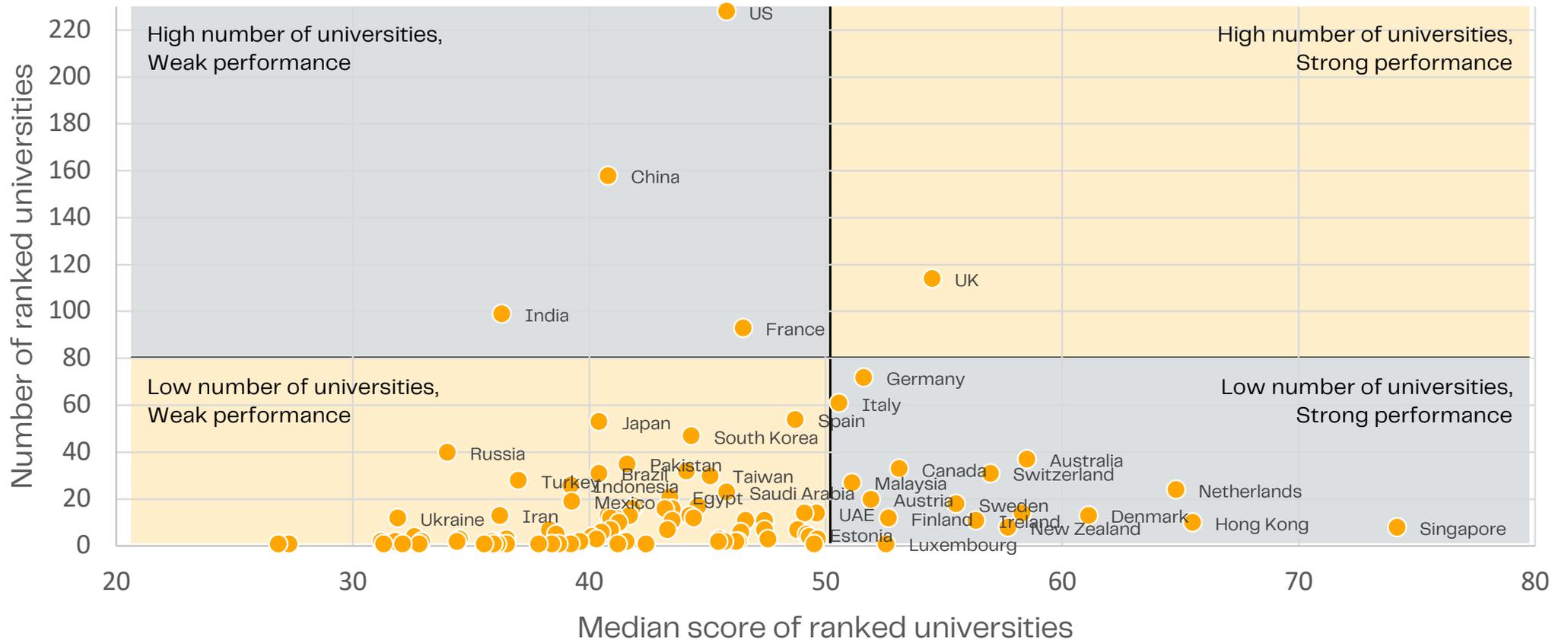
# ...which tend to be highest in East Asia, Oceania and Western Europe

Median score of ranked institutions (Top 40 countries)



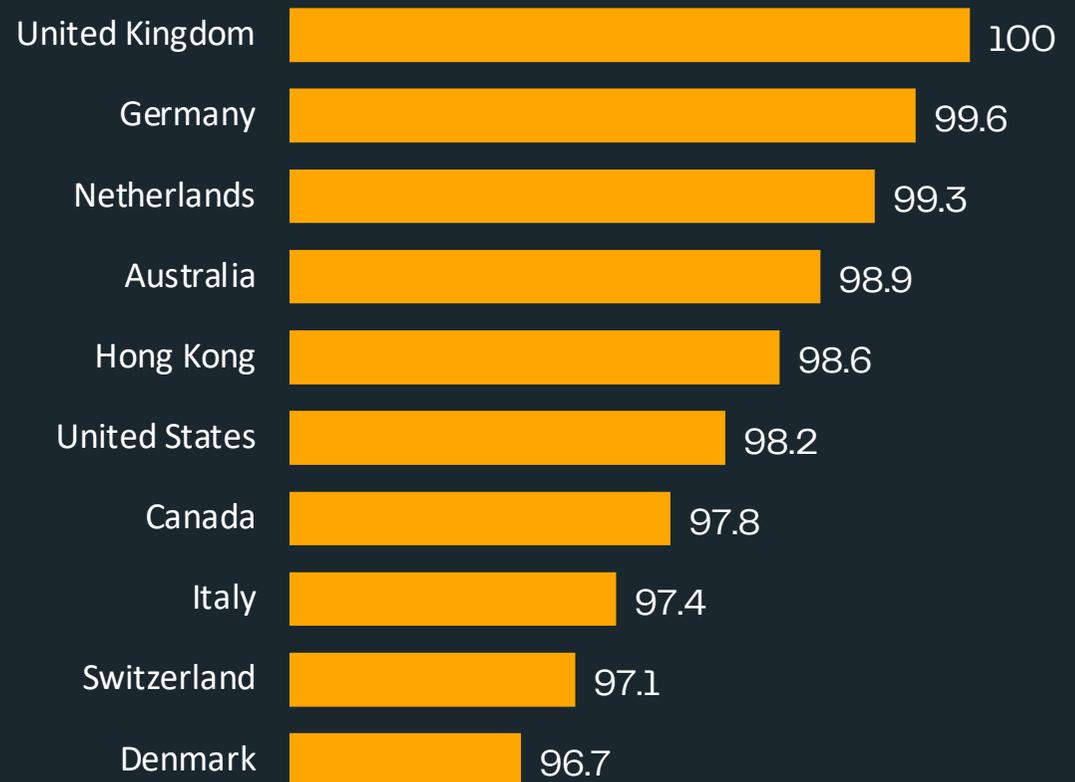
Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026

# However, for many of these territories, this is confined to a relatively small number of high quality institutions



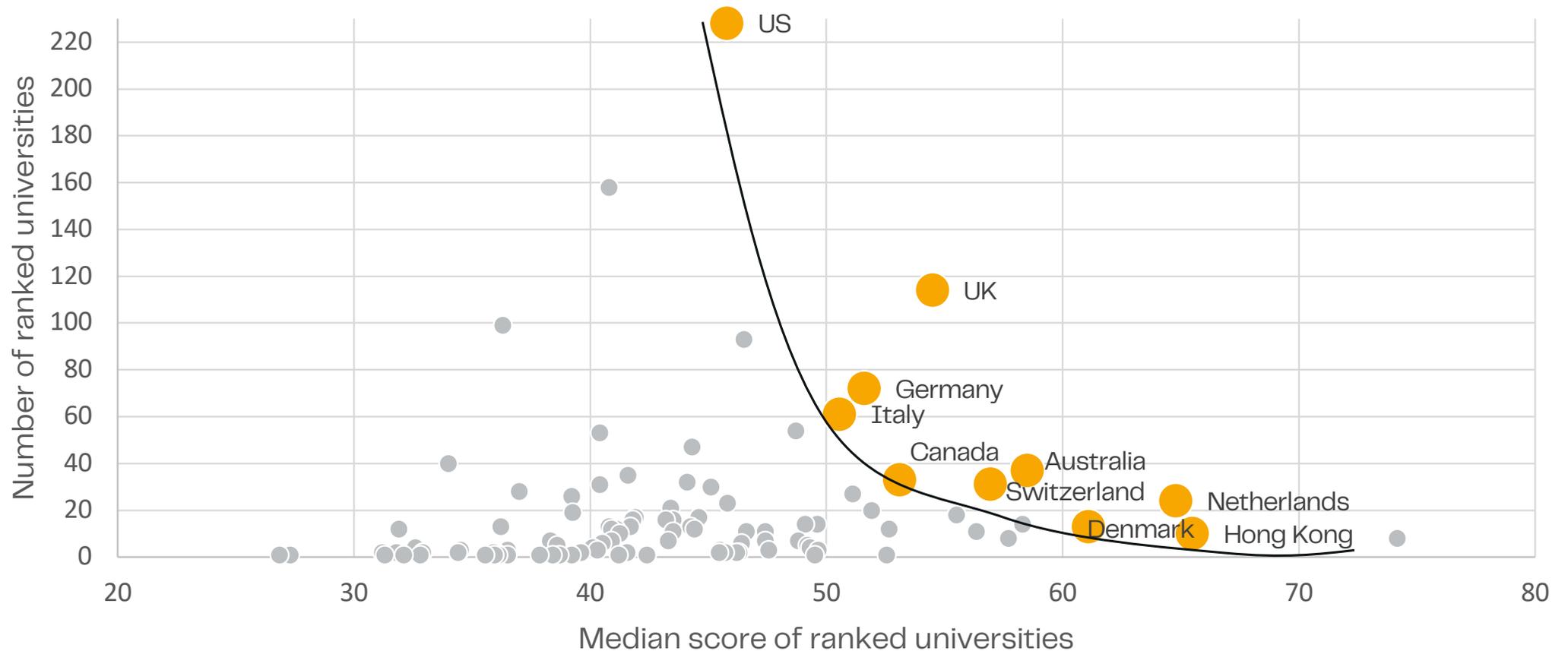
So our World Future Skills Index takes into account both quality and quantity when assessing which countries are best prepared

### Top 10 countries for 'Academic Readiness'



Source: QS World Future Skills Index

# The balance of quality to quantity of institutions is what makes HE sectors in these countries stand out



**The average performance of universities in AI, Digital and Green-related subjects**

# Subjects used to assess performance in AI, Digital and Green-related areas:

## AI

- Computer Science
- Data Science
- Engineering & Technology
- Electrical Engineering
- Mathematics
- Statistics
- Linguistics
- Psychology

## Digital

- Computer Science
- Data Science
- Engineering & Technology
- Electrical Engineering
- Business
- Communication
- Library Management
- Art & Design

## Green

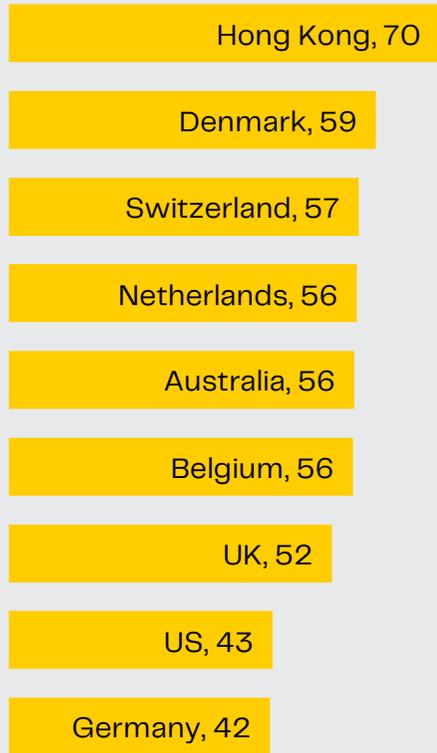
- Environmental Sciences
- Earth Sciences
- Agriculture
- Geography
- Development Studies
- Materials Science
- Biology
- Architecture
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Social Policy

# Median scores in AI & Digital related subjects:

## Computer Science



## Data Science



## Engineering

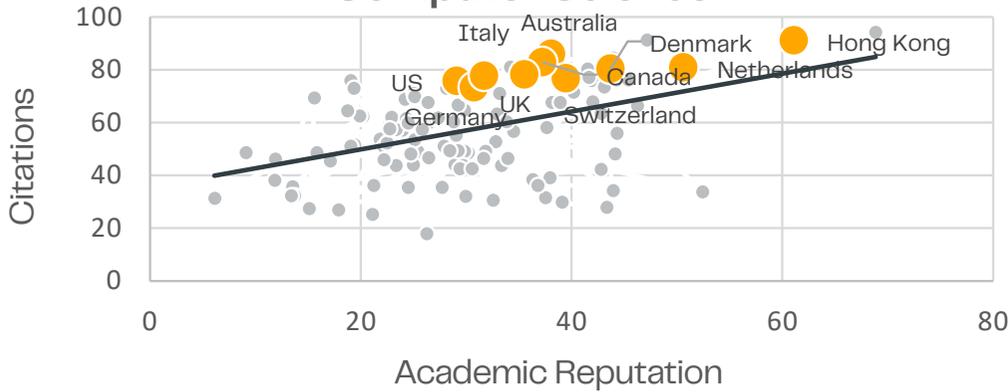


## Electrical Engineering

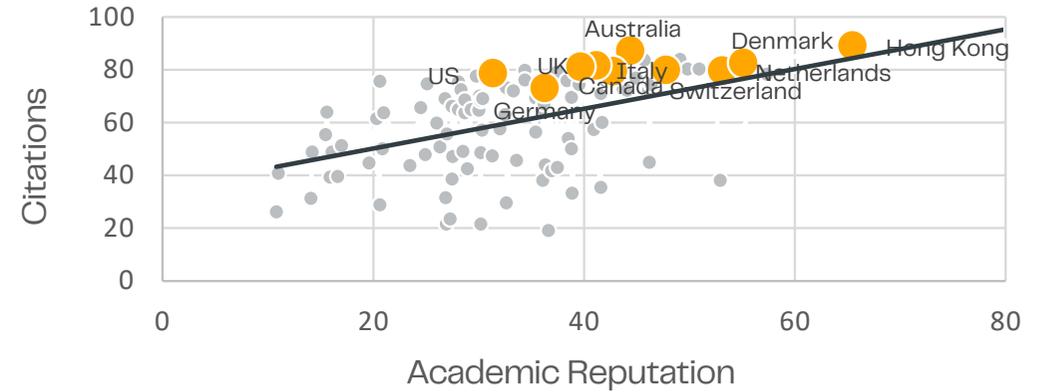


# The research impact of institutions in these countries is what drives high performance in these areas

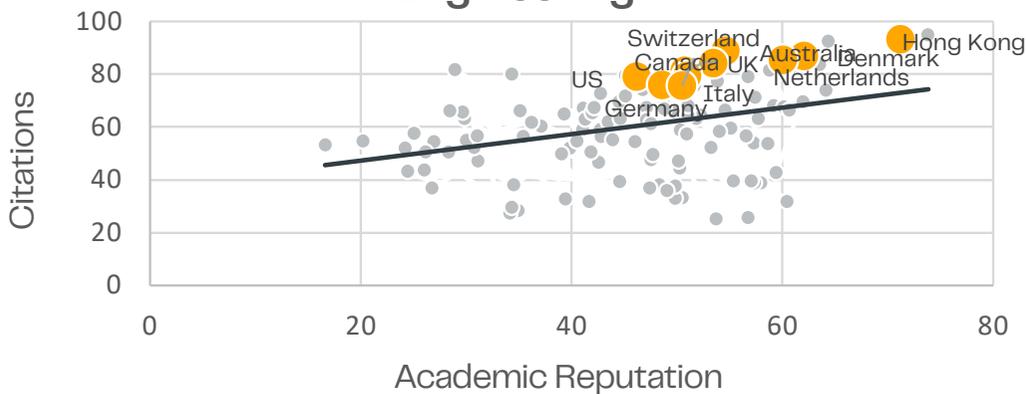
### Computer Science



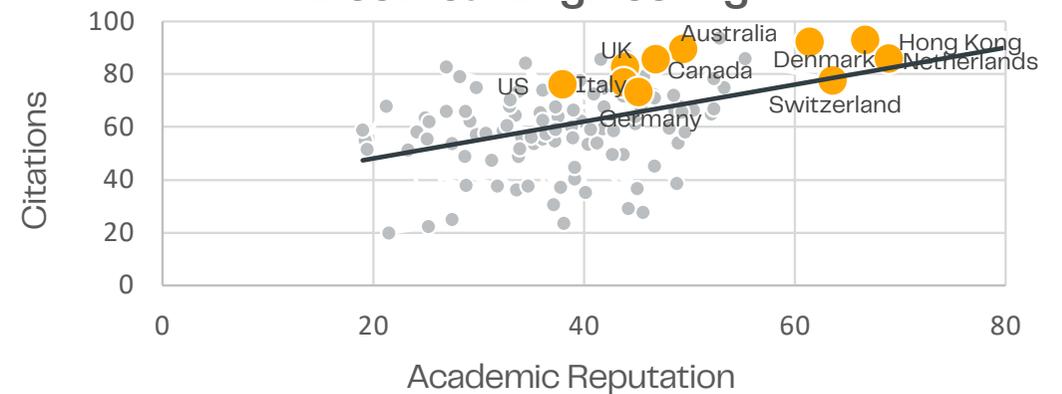
### Data Science



### Engineering

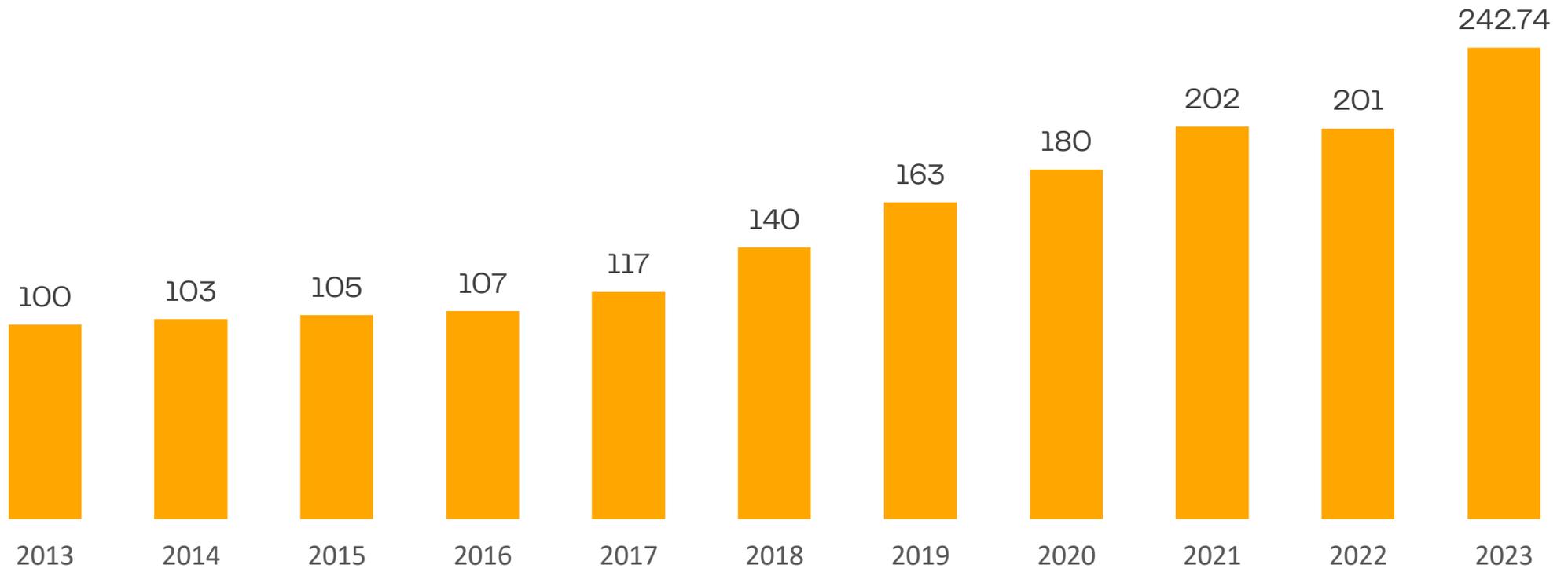


### Electrical Engineering



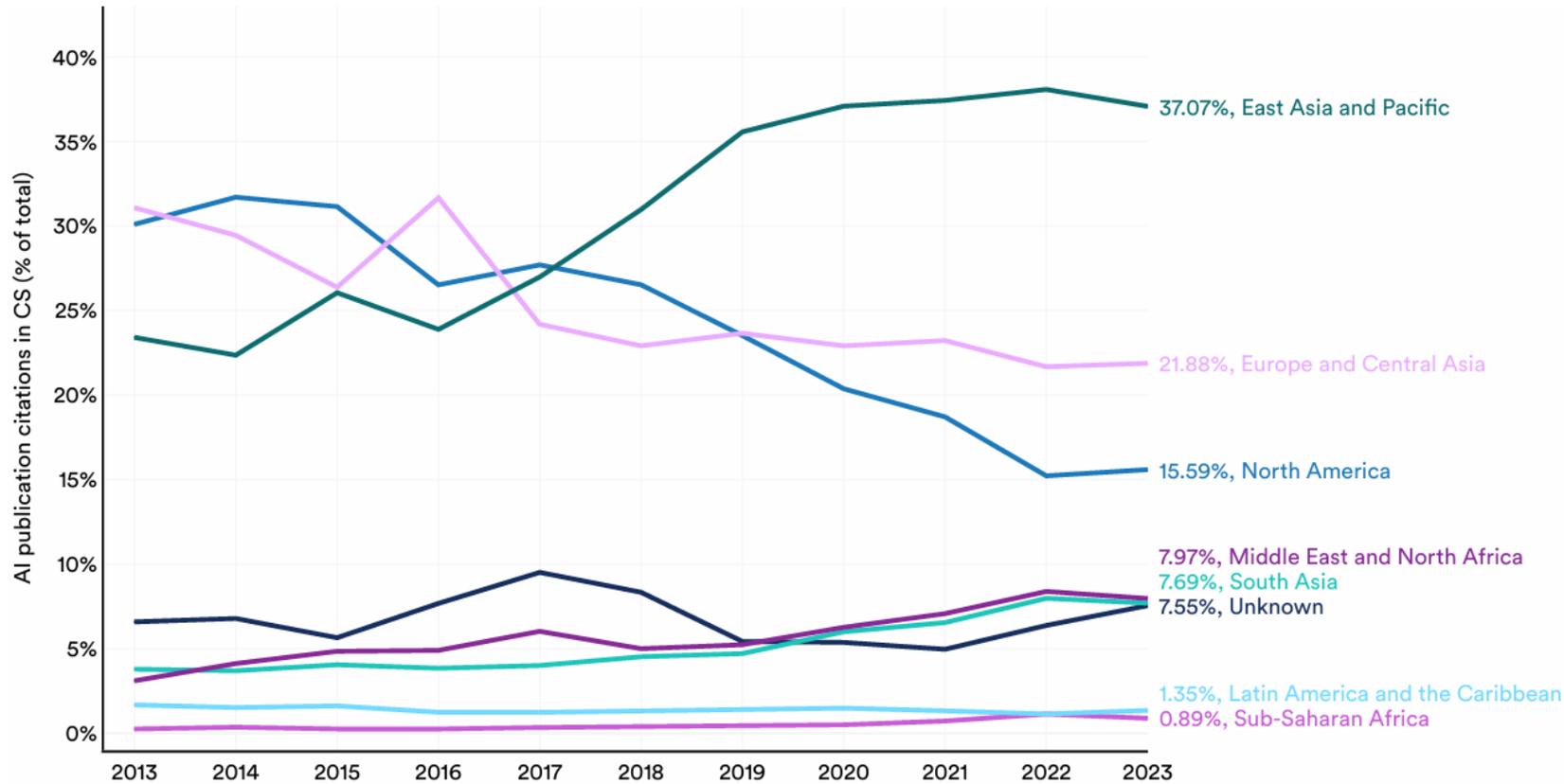
# Whilst the volume of research in Computer Science in AI has increased by 140% since 2013...

Number of AI Publications in Computer Science (in thousands)



# ...the focus on AI in Computer Science is more acute in East and South East Asia which will challenge the status quo

AI publication citations in Computer Science (% of total):



China produced more AI publications and citations than any other country in 2023

Source: Artificial Intelligence Index Report 2025: Stanford University

# Median scores in Green related subjects:

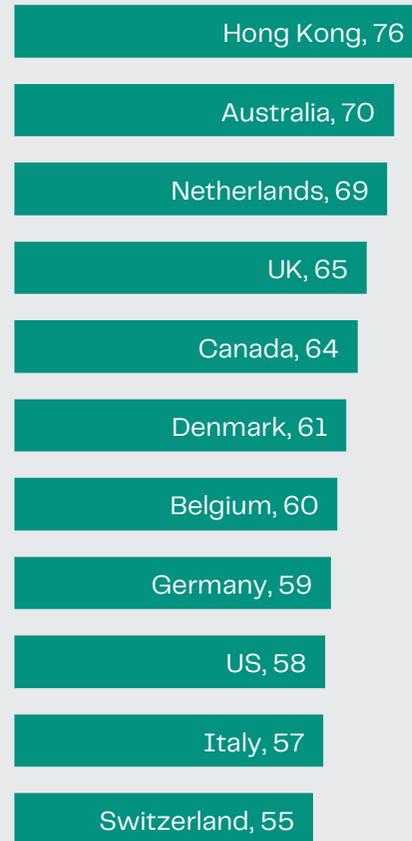
## Environmental Science



## Earth Science



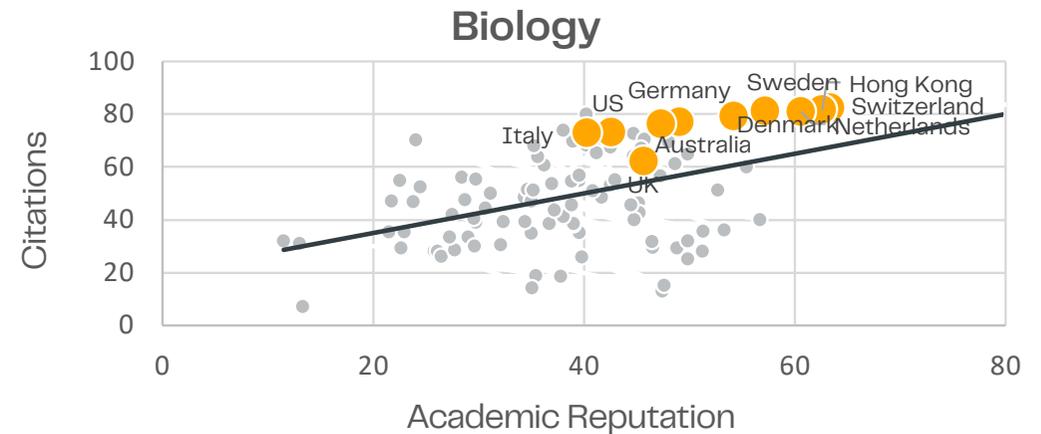
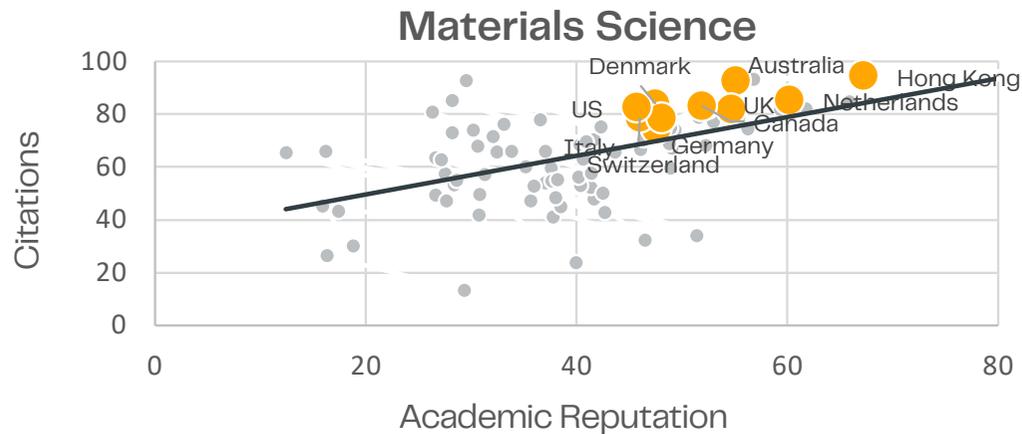
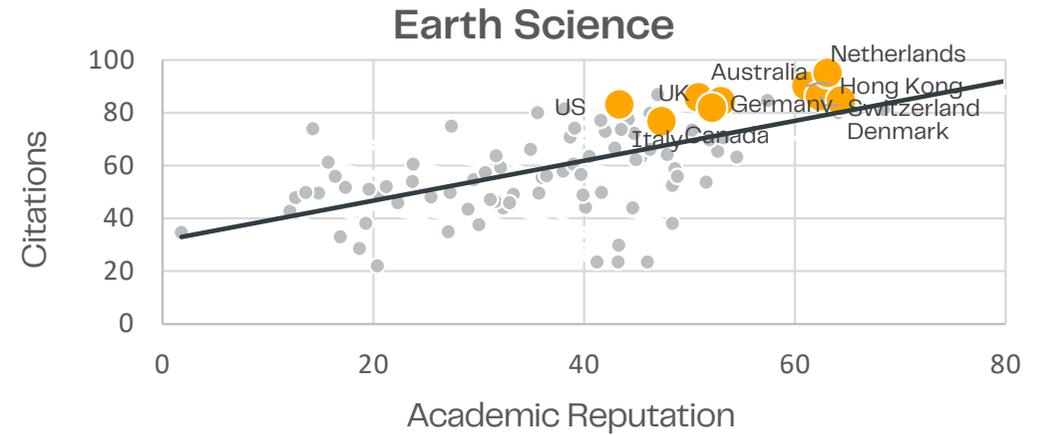
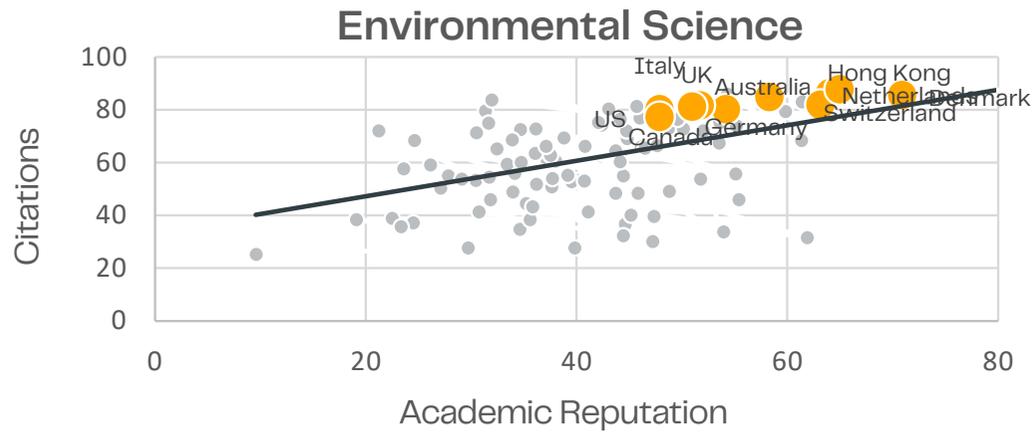
## Materials Science



## Biology



# The research impact in these areas provides a solid foundation to grow their reputation further



Source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026: Median Citations score & Median Academic Reputation score